



Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities

Celebrating 33 Years of Leadership & Advocacy

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Kecia B. Weller
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MINUTES OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

The regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities was held on Wednesday, October 15, 2008, in Room 140 of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Kecia B. Weller at 1:15 p.m. Roll call was taken by Mr. Lee Millen, Commission Staff, and the following Commissioners were present at the meeting: President Kecia B. Weller, 1st Vice President Janet A. Neal, 2nd Vice President John B. Troost, Treasurer Bernard Siegel, Commissioners Maria Mustelier-Parrish, Donna Pomerantz, and Alexia Teran. Commissioners Michael G. Gureckas, Donna Pomerantz, and Sheila D. Wright were not present.

APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 20, 2008 MINUTES

On motion of 1st Vice President Neal, seconded by Commissioner Mustelier-Parrish, and unanimously carried, the minutes for the meeting of August 20, 2008, were approved.

The Commission noted that although no meeting minutes are required of those meetings at which a quorum was not obtained, the Commission would like to receive a summary of events. Therefore, after discussion on motion of 2nd Vice President Troost, seconded by 1st Vice President Neal, and unanimously carried, the Commission agreed and requested that a summary be prepared for the meeting of September 17, 2008, at which a quorum was not obtained.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Block discussed the *plastic bag ban* in the County of Los Angeles.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Weller reported that the Disability Rights Legal Center (DLRC) will be holding a one-day Self-Advocacy Training Academy for people with disabilities. It will be held on Saturday, November 8, 2008, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Loyola Law School located at 919 Albany Street, Los Angeles, CA, 90015. This training will provide attendees with the basic legal information and advocacy skills needed to successfully challenge discrimination in the areas of employment, housing, and communication access. Registration is required and a free lunch will be provided. To register for the Academy, or for more information, please contact Mr. Eric Turner at DLRC at (213) 736-1408 VOICE, (213) 736-8310 TDD, (213) 736-1030 Fax, or by e-mail at eric.turner@lls.edu.

STAFF REPORT

President Weller reported that Mss. Rosemary Osuna and Martha Arana, who regularly staff the Commission meeting, would not be attending the meeting because they are working on the forthcoming Access Awards Luncheon. She added that Mr. Lee Millen and Ms. Mireya Rivera would staff the meeting.

1st Vice President Neal commented on the great job staff members, Rosemary Osuna and Martha Arana, were doing with the coordination of the Luncheon.

PRESENTATION BY CAROLYN CLARK, INTERIM CEO OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. MULTISERVICE AMBULATORY CENTER (MLK-MAC) ON THE STATUS OF THE MLK-MAC

Ms. Rhonda Bean, representative of MLK-MAC, provided the Commission with a status of services offered, and reported the following:

- MLK-MAC provides comprehensive outpatient services through 66 clinics. Clinic hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- MLK-MAC Urgent Care Center is open 16 hours every day – 8:00 a.m. to midnight.
- Hubert H. Humphrey Comprehensive Health Center and Dollarhide Health Center also serve patients in this area as a part of the southwest area network.

- The outpatient clinics include: Dental/Oral Maxillofacial, General Surgery, Internal Medicine, Neurology, Ophthalmology, Oral Maxillofacial, Orthopedics, Otolaryngology, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Pulmonary Services, Pharmacy, Radiology, Rehabilitative Services, Surgery, Urology, and Community Health Plan Clinic.
- The surgery center has submitted an application to the State to be a licensed ambulatory service center.
- MLK-MAC passed the first inspection, and is due for a second round of inspection.

After discussion, 1st Vice President Neal extended an invitation to Ms. Bean to be a guest speaker on the Commission's radio show, the "Disability Network," to give a status on MLK-MAC to the Community-at-Large. 1st Vice President Neal also invited Ms. Bean to attend future Commission meetings and provide status reports on MLK-MAC. Ms. Bean accepted invitations.

PRESENTATION BY GRETCHEN SIEMERS, L. A. COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT, HOUSING SECTION, ON A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION ORDINANCE

Ms. Siemers, representing the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, thanked the Commission for allowing her to make a presentation before the Commission on the *Reasonable Accommodation Ordinance* and added the following:

The Regional Planning Department (RPD) functions include: "*Current Planning*" which involves permit processing of land use applications (Discretionary and NonDiscretionary) and enforcement of zoning regulations and permit conditions, and "*Long Range Planning*" which involve County's General Plans, County-wide zoning ordinances, and local community plans for the Unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. One of RPD's major functions is called the Housing Element (HE), a mandatory element of the County's General Plan, which is the outline for growth. The HE's function is to include the population needs analysis (including special needs populations), a constraints analysis, sites inventory, and programs.

The HE was adopted on August 5, 2008, and is currently undergoing certification by the State Department of Housing and Urban Development. Its requirements include a plan for housing for people with disabilities. HE requires local jurisdiction to analyze governmental constraints on housing for people with disabilities, including land use, building codes, site improvements, fees and associated procedures. HE will also provide a program that removes governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing for people with disabilities, and provides for reasonable accommodations for housing designed for, intended for occupancy by, or with supportive services for people with disabilities.

The Fair Housing applicable laws call for “*equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.*” The relevant laws include: The Fair Housing Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Unruh Civil Rights Act, the Fair Housing amendments of 1988 and the CA Fair Employment and Housing Act. Advocates, providers and developers of housing for people with disabilities also have fair housing protections. Protections afforded to people with disabilities are also extended to providers and developers of housing for people with disabilities. To this end, reasonable accommodation is providing flexibility in the application of zoning regulations or policies when it is necessary to eliminate barriers to housing opportunities.

The Reasonable Accommodation Ordinance will be a part of the Los Angeles County Code, Title 12 – Environmental Protection. It will regulate land use and the administrative processes for granting or denying a reasonable accommodation. The ordinance is anticipated to be ready for approval by the Board of Supervisors in April 2009, but RPD will have a draft ordinance for review and comment by stakeholders. In the meantime, RPD will conduct extensive research on Fair Housing Laws and other relevant local jurisdiction policies. Post adoption plans include: outreach with developer and community groups and internal education and training for RPD staff.

After discussion, Ms. Siemers concluded her report, and posed the following questions to the Commission and meeting attendees, and requested that input be submitted to her:

- *What are the major housing impediments that your consumers face?*
- *Have you or anyone you know ever requested a Reasonable Accommodation from Zoning Standards?*
- *What would make the process easier for people with disabilities?*

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee

President Weller reported that an Executive Committee meeting took place before this meeting. Committee members discussed a Commission Workshop and recommend that the Commission hold a Workshop on January 24, 2009, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Election procedures were also discussed and the Committee agreed to make a recommendation to the Commission to develop new ballots for forthcoming elections in order to facilitate and streamline the process.

(Commissioner Rubenstein joined the meeting)

Public Relations Committee

Disability Network Radio Program KTYM 1460 AM

1st Vice President Neal reported that the captioning and streaming of the "Disability Network" radio show is still pending, and she looks forward to an administrative resolution to get this project started.

Disability Mentoring Day – October 15, 2008

1st Vice President Neal reported that the Board of Supervisors gave a presentation and scroll to the Commission on Tuesday, October 14, 2008, during a Board meeting, and proclaimed October 15, 2008, as "*Disability Mentoring Day*" throughout the County. She presented President Weller with the scroll.

Events Committee

Access Awards Luncheon

1st Vice President Neal reported the following:

- The Luncheon tickets have been selling, and to date, the event seems to be “sold out.” The Commission will not offer discounted tickets to this year’s luncheon. Although the prices for the venue were increased by \$10, the Commission did not increase the price of the tickets this year.
- Mr. Lou Ferrigno, Actor/Bodybuilder and Reserve Deputy for the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, has confirmed his attendance to the event. The Public Information Office, Room 358, has a display featuring life-size poster “cutouts” of Mr. Ferrigno. The posters feature Mr. Ferrigno posing as the “*Incredible Hulk*” and as a Los Angeles Sheriff Deputy.

Community Services Committee

Approval to write an advisory letter to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors requesting support of the Steve Grissom Relief Fund Act.

1st Vice President Neal discussed correspondence submitted by Mr. Alex Ghaffari during his presentation before the Commission at the September 17, 2008, Commission meeting. She added that because a quorum was not obtained at the meeting, the Commission could not vote on writing an advisory letter to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors requesting its support of the Steve Grissom Relief Fund.

After discussion, on motion of Commissioner Pomerantz, seconded by 2nd Vice President Troost and unanimously carried, the Commission approved to write an advisory letter to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors requesting support of the Steve Grissom Relief Fund Act.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

ASI Report

Mr. Kurt Hagen reported the following:

- The last Access Services Board of Directors’ meeting attended by Mr. Hagen took place on September 22, 2008.
- Following closed session, it was reported that there was a settlement reached in a longtime lawsuit between Access Services, Inc. and United Independent Taxi. Because of the nature of the lawsuit, the settlement terms were not disclosed.

- Board member, Dolores Nason, a two-term former Chair of the Board, was given a Service Award and was thanked by the Commission for her years of service with the Board of Directors.
- The Board of Directors approved a new Drug and Alcohol Policy for both direct Access Services employees and drivers, which increases the level and frequency of testing administered by ASI.
- Committee appointments for the various Committees were approved.
- The Access Services Board of Directors' bylaws being amended. Amendments will be considered at the November 2008 Board Meeting. The Board wants to add a definition to "*open process*" as it relates to the recruitment of a seat on the Board by the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities and by the Independent Living Centers. The Board is also considering the selection of an alternate for instances where a representative is not available to attend meetings and voting is delayed.
- The new Access Paratransit logo design is being considered. Board members agreed to keep the word "Paratransit" in the design of the new logo.
- The feasibility of setting forth a new superior service award honoring Mr. Jerry Walker who recently passed away is being considered. Material was distributed outlining the operational mechanics of this new service award.
- Board members are required to attend a Community Advisory Committee meeting twice a year. He attended his first CAC meeting on Tuesday, October 14, 2008.
- A determination was made for CAC meetings to be limited to two hours only.
- Issues addressed at the October 14th CAC meeting included: riders with service animals, lengthy rideshares, canceling service calls with ASI, and the possibility of changing the location for the CAC meetings. CAC will consider a recommendation to buy mats for the vans to protect service dogs from sliding in the vans and from heat from the undercarriage. The Service Animals Subcommittee will address systemic problems regarding riders with services animals ridesharing with other ASI patrons who are allergic to animals.

After discussion, on motion of Commissioner Pomerantz, seconded by 1st Vice President Neal, and unanimously carried, the Commission approved to write a letter to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors regarding Access Services' overall customer service and attach complaints received by the Commission about the services provided by ASI.

Mr. Arnold Sacks, a member of the public, addressed the Commission, and shared his experiences as an ASI rider.

MTA Report

There was none.

REPORT BY GORDON ANTHONY, SENIOR DEPUTY COMPLIANCE OFFICER

In the absence of Mr. Gordon Anthony, Mr. Kurt Hagen reported the following:

- The Office of Affirmative Action Compliance will be attending the 17th Annual Access Awards Luncheon. Some of the attendees include Administrative Deputies Mr. Ken Slu, Ms. Cecile Ochoa, and Mr. Hayward Harris, Jr.
- OAAC is working with the final 25 departments' transition and self-evaluation plans.
- OAAC is working extensively with Los Angeles Sheriff's Department on accessibility issues that the Department faces and an accessibility litigation that is pending in this Department.
- Information on LASD parking enforcement unit is being researched, and he will bring forward the information to 1st Vice President Neal as soon as he receives it.

ITEMS NOT POSTED FOR CONSIDERATION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

There was none.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1st Vice President Neal thanked the Los Angeles City Fire Department, the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the State Forestry for their hard work in containing the recent fires in the Sylmar area.

1st Vice President Neal encouraged everyone to vote on November 4, 2008.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Commissioner Pomerantz, seconded by Commissioner Mustelier-Parish, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Kecia Weller, President
Janet A. Neal, 1st Vice President
John B. Troost, 2nd Vice President
Bernard Siegel, Treasurer
Maria Mustelier-Parrish
Donna Pomerantz
Harley D. Rubenstein
Alexia Teran
Sheila Wright

ASI

Luis Pacheco

Guests

Ray Louis McKeever, Southern California
Association for the Deaf and Blind
Eddy Urserly, Self-Discrimination-4-Discrimin
Magda Carrero, Eastern Los Angeles
Regional Center
Joan Taylor,
Senior Disabled Transport Subsidies

Excused Absence

Michael Gureckas
Wan-Chun Chang
Wendy L. Welt

Los Angeles County

Kurt Hagen, OAAC
Gretchen Siemers, RPD
Rhonda Bean, DHS MLK-MAC

Board of Supervisors

Lee Millen, Staff
Mireya Rivera, Staff

Carl Swirkal
Marvin White
Bob Laparro, LifeSigns, Inc.
Jonathan Gleischer, LifeSigns, Inc.
Carolyn McDow